

From: kosh
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I disagree with the microsoft settlement that has been proposed since overall I feel it won't do any good long term. I do not think they need to be broken up and financial penalties are not the solution. Short term no solution will really work so what I want is a more permanent solution.

1) All formats used by microsoft should be completely documented at least 3 months before being used in any application. This includes extensions to the html spec, the word document format, and the smb file sharing format.

2) They should be required to implement the specificaion(s) in areas where their products work in addition to their own systems. In the case of web browsers they should be required to implement http 1.0/1.1 completely and xhtml 1.0 to the letter of the spec.

For example their support of much of http 1.0 and http 1.1 is shoddy at best and that makes it very hard to work with Internet Explorer as a web browser. All versions of IE so far have a but with the Content-Type header especially when working with the Content-Disposition header however so far as I have been able to find out so far it is the only browser that has this bug. This makes the browser very hard to work with server side. It seems in many cases you can either work with Microsoft IE or you can work with the rest of the world. Unfortunately because of their monopoly that puts developers in a very bad position since if you choose the non microsoft option most people can then no longer use the web application. Lynx, Links, Konqueror, Opera, Mozilla, Netscape 4.x, and Netscape 6.x all get those parts of the specificaion correct.

3) All API information in their products should be fully documented and available for free by download in an open format like html. Microsoft maintains too much of its monopoly power by using hidden APIs and if they where required to disclose all of that then it would get rid of that advantage.

None of these items would hurt microsoft in the next year or maybe even the next two years however that is not the point of the penalty. The point is to restore the balance of the system and to help consumers. Long term this method will give consumers more choice by restoring competition to the market. In the end that is what I think the real purpose of antitrust is. Not to penalize the violators but to help the consumers by restoring the system.

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